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ABSTRACT

This report presents the findings of a survey of 255 further education college lecturers who had successfully completed the Certificate in Education (Further Education) course at the Scottish School of Further Education (SSFE), Jordanhill, in the 5 years following the restructuring of the course in 1986. The views of 33 principals of colleges of further education on the training provision provided by SSFE are also given. The views of the college lecturers are analyzed in terms of the value of the course, effect on their own teaching, communication about the course, the teaching conducted, balance of course work between SSFE and lecturer's own college, attitudes toward block release arrangements, usefulness of mentors and support systems, and value of the Teaching Qualification (Further Education) received upon completion of the course. Views of principals are analyzed in terms of cost-effectiveness of the SSFE course, value of the teaching qualification given, appropriateness of the teaching methods, administrative arrangements, consequences of the block release nature of the course, and the colleges' influence in development of staff training. (JDD)

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Customers' Views of Further Education

Lecturer Training

John Hall

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Customers' Views of Further Education

Lecturer Training

John Hall

Report to the Review Committee on the Training of Further Education College Lecturers in Scotland

The Scottish Council for Research in Education

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Preface

In 1992 the Scottish Office Education Department commissioned the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE) to undertake a survey of the views of Scottish further education lecturers who had completed the Certificate in Education (Further Education) course at the Scottish School of Further education. SCRE was also asked to prepare a document summarising the then current position regarding further education lecturer training in England and Wales. These surveys were intended to inform the deliberations of the Review Committee on the Training of Further Education College Lecturers in Scotland, chaired by Professor Anderson, formerly of Napier Polytechnic (now Napier University).

The Review Committee has now reported and SCRE is making the findings of these surveys publicly available as two documents: *Customers' Views of Further Education Lecturer Training*; and *Training Courses for Further Education College Lecturers*. They are presented in the form in which they went to the Review Committee. It should be noted that the research was carried out in the summer of 1992, and that many changes have taken place since then. Most notable, of course, is the incorporation of Scottish further education colleges as independent bodies, and the newly acquired university status of many former higher education institutions. Some of the institutions which are referred to, particularly in *Training Courses for Further Education College Lecturers*, have since changed their names.

Thanks are due to many people who assisted in the research. First amongst these must be all the college lecturers and principals who took the time to speak to us about their experiences and complete questionnaires for us. Thanks are also due to the members of the Review Committee, members of HM Inspectorate and Scottish Office officials for their help and guidance, and to the Scottish School of Further Education for providing us with much useful information.

John Hall

Sue Mingard

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What differences in attitudes can be identified between different groups of principals? 39

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Principals with SSFE connections are more favourably disposed towards SSFE and less likely to favour greater local provision of training. 39

2. Geographical distance from SSFE

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Introduction

This report presents the findings of a survey of 255 further education college lecturers who have successfully completed the Certificate in Education (Further Education) course at the Scottish School of Further Education, Jordanhill (SSFE) in the five years following the restructuring of the course in 1986. The views of thirty three principals of colleges of further education on the training provision provided by SSFE are also given.

The survey was conducted by post in June 1992. A fifty per cent sample of lecturers who had attended SSFE was drawn from each year's intake from 1986 to 1990. No lecturers from the 1991 intake were approached as they had not yet completed the course. Lecturers from institutions other than FE colleges who had attended the course were excluded from the sample. At the same time all principals of FE colleges were approached for their views.

The Course

The course runs for five consecutive terms on a block release basis. Intakes are in April and May. Blocks in college are: four weeks in the first and fourth terms (summer), and one week in each of the second and fifth terms (December). Between these blocks the course runs by distance learning supported by tutorial visits and telephone contact, with support in the lecturers own colleges supplied by college mentors.

There are three major components of the course. These are:

- Teaching Methods, which is concerned with the development of professional competences associated with classroom performance and includes supervised teaching practice;
- Theories of the Instructional Process, which is concerned with the theory underpinning learning and teaching within further education colleges;
- Education Studies, which is concerned mainly with wider issues affecting further education curricula and systems.

Successful completion of the course leads to the award of a Teaching Qualification (Further Education), or TQ(FE), which is recognised by the General Teaching Council (GTC).

The Study

The Scottish Council for Research in Education was asked by the Scottish Office Education Department to address the following two objectives:

1. To explore and analyse the views of FE lecturers who have taken the Certificate in Education (FE) in the last five years on the strengths, weaknesses and relevance of the course.

2. To conduct a desk study comparing the form and content of Certificate in Education (FE) course with comparable courses in England and Wales.

The present report addresses the first of these objectives, with the addition of a consideration of the views of FE college principals. The second objective is addressed separately in an accompanying report.

Details of the Sample

Details of the sample and response rates for both college lecturers and principals are given in the following tables. It can be seen that an overall response rate of 50% was achieved for the lecturer sample, this representing 28% of all those who had attended the SSFE course in the years in question. Seventy three per cent of the college principals who were approached responded to the questionnaires. Given the numbers involved, it can be seen that there is no great disparity in responses between different year's intake groups of lecturers, or between responses from different regions for either the lecturers or principals.

1. The Sample in relation to the SSFE intake:

Year of intake	Total SSFE intake for that year.	Number of questionnaires sent	Number of questionnaires returned
1986	156	103	31 (30% of sample, 20% of year group)
1987	195	103	30 (29% of sample, 15% of year group)
1988	193	103	39 (38% of sample, 20% of year group)
1989	191	100	69 (69% of sample, 36% of year group)
1990	187	100	58 (58% of sample, 31% of year group)
MISSING VALUES	(No year given on return)		28
TOTALS	922	509	255 (50% of sample, 28% of total intake)

2. The sample by Region

Region	Questionnaires sent out	Questionnaires returned	Percentage response
Borders	12	8	66%
Central	27	14	52%
Dumfries and Galloway	13	5	38%
Fife	27	15	56%
Grampian	44	20	45%
Highland	26	17	65%
Lothian	63	27	43%
Strathclyde	231	103	45%
Tayside	58	31	53%
Island authorities	8	7	88%
MISSING VALUES		8	
TOTALS	509	255	50%

The sample was drawn from class lists supplied by the SSFE. Only members of staff of the 45 Scottish FE colleges listed in the Education Directory ('Yellow Book')* were included. Members of staff of other institutions who had attended SSFE, and of Newbattle Abbey College, were excluded. Of the 45 colleges, one failed to be represented in the randomly chosen sample and another, which had three members of staff approached, produced no returns. We therefore have returns from 43 Scottish FE colleges.

3. Details of Principal sample by region:

Region	Questionnaires sent out	Questionnaires returned	Percentage response
Islands	3	2	66%
Borders	1	1	100%
Central	2	1	50%
Dumfries and Galloway	2	2	100%
Fife	4	3	75%
Grampian	3	1	33%
Highland	2	2	100%
Lothian	5	4	80%
Strathclyde	20	14	70%
Tayside	3	3	100%
TOTALS	45	33	73%

Characteristics of the lecturer sample

The sample consisted of 255 lecturers, 68% of whom were male and 32% female. They taught in the following subject areas:

**Education Authorities Directory and Annual 1992*, School Government Publishing Co. Ltd.

Subject area	Number of returns	% of total returns
Interdisciplinary Studies	39	15
Business and Administration	46	18
Distribution, Food and Personal Services	21	8
Engineering	52	20
Built Environment	40	16
Caring	7	3
Industrial Processing	28	11
Land and Sea-Based Industries	15	6
Pure and Applied Sciences	7	3
MISSING VALUES	7	
TOTALS	255	

They had a range of levels of experience by the time that they entered the course at SSFE:

Years full-time teaching	2 or less	3	4	5	6-9	10 or more
Number and percentage	58 (23%)	52 (21%)	38 (15%)	45 (18%)	47 (19%)	13 (5%)

In addition 36 (14%) of the respondents had two or more years part-time teaching experience before entering the SSFE course, and 109 (44%) had had some training experience in industry or commerce before becoming FE lecturers. For the most part this was usually some form of trainee supervisory role which had formed part of their duties.

The vast majority of respondents had been lecturers at the time of entry to the course, though some had since achieved promoted status:

	lecturer	senior lecturer	head of section / dept	senior management
Status on entry to the course	231 (91%)	21 (8%)	1 (-)	0
Status at time of survey	183 (73%)	52 (21%)	15 (6%)	1 (-)

One hundred and two (40%) of the respondents were registered with the GTC at the time of the survey. A further seven (3%) had been registered but had allowed their registration to lapse.

A note on statistics

Several differences were found to exist between different groups of respondents. All responses were checked for differences according to year of entry to the course, length of teaching experience prior to entry to the course, region in which they were employed, distance of their college from SSFE, subject taught and whether or not they were GTC registered. Where differences are identified as 'significant ' this means that they were statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level or better. The tests used were Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of variance or Mann-Whitney U.

The views of FE college lecturers

In this chapter each section addresses a research question which was a focus for the study. Within each section the organisation of material is as follows:

1. a statement of the research question being addressed;
2. relevant quantitative data from the questionnaire survey;
3. a selection of relevant written comments made by the respondents;
4. a brief discussion of the results, pointing out any significant differences between groups of respondents, or points of comparison with other results;
5. a summary statement of the main finding.

How did FE staff value the component parts of the course?

	Very valuable	Reasonably valuable	Limited value	No value	Not Applicable
1.1 Education Studies N=249	22 9%	107 43%	100 40%	19 8%	1 -
1.2 Teaching Methods N=255	125 49%	92 36%	35 14%	3 1%	0
1.3 Theories of the Instructional Process N=254	55 22%	120 47%	65 26%	13 5%	1 -
1.4 Projects N=251	41 16%	117 47%	73 29%	14 6%	6 2%
1.5 Curriculum Development Project N=255	105 41%	99 39%	38 15%	10 4%	3 1%
1.6 Thematic Studies Options N=249	46 18%	94 38%	78 31%	25 10%	6 2%
1.7 Lesson Planning Exercises N=253	96 38%	106 42%	38 15%	12 5%	1 -
1.8 Teaching Practice Lessons N=253	108 43%	90 36%	44 17%	11 4%	0
1.9 Maintaining a record of professional practice N=253	31 12%	85 34%	88 35%	45 18%	4 2%

Comments by lecturers:

1. The comparative studies part of the Education Studies part of the course was not of any use as the majority of the self-study booklets were of poor quality and could only be read with great patience and a lot of time being devoted to working out the missing words.

2. For the major assignments, TIP and CDP, I thought (in my group) we were very much geared to 'jumping through hoops' and steered in the exact direction that the tutors wanted us to go.

3. The Education Studies, TIP and Thematic studies options, although not rated as 'very valuable', nevertheless were of great interest and taken together were very important in giving me a broader perspective of teaching matters

4. The lecturer delivery of some of the subject matter, especially Education Studies and some Teaching Methods, left a lot to be desired and where I, as a beginner, was looking for guidance as to an ideal teaching technique, I left the course thinking I could do a lot better

5. Teaching methods were exceptionally well taught, backed by supportive tutor visits to the college and my class. To have a supportive and positively critical teaching methods tutor observing you as an individual within the teaching environment is greatly appreciated

6. With the exception of lesson planning exercises and the curriculum development project, the entire course was a waste of resources in terms of both time away from work and financially in course fees.

7. The teaching methods practice lessons were the most informative and meaningful parts of the TQ(FE) course.

Discussion:

A high proportion of lecturers found the Teaching Methods, Teaching Practice lessons, Curriculum Development Project and Lesson Planning exercises to be 'very valuable' or 'reasonably valuable' components of the course.

To a slightly lesser extent the Theories of the Instructional Process (TIP) and Project components were also considered valuable.

It is difficult to comment on the Thematic Studies options as the respondents will have taken different options.

Education Studies and the Record of Professional Practice were, overall, given the lowest value ratings of the course components.

These findings suggest that lecturers attending the course place greatest value on those components which are thought to have practical relevance to their work in the classroom.

However, there was a statistically significant difference between those lecturers who are currently registered with the GTC and others. Those registered with the GTC were more positive about Education Studies, Projects, Thematic Studies options and the record of Professional Practice than were non-GTC registered lecturers.

In general, most FE staff placed a higher value on those components of the course which were thought to have practical relevance in the classroom.

What effect did lecturers say that the course had on their own teaching?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
2.1 The course provided a welcome chance to reflect upon my own teaching	94	142	15	4
N=255	37%	56%	6%	2%
2.2 The course provided me with knowledge to improve my teaching N=252	72	146	29	5
	29%	58%	12%	2%
2.3 The course gave me a repertoire of methods of delivery N=250	53	133	54	10
	21%	53%	22%	4%
2.4 The course allowed me to try out new teaching methods that I had not tried before N=253	56	143	48	6
	22%	57%	19%	2%
2.5 The course has improved my effectiveness in the classroom N=250	58	154	36	2
	23%	62%	14%	1%

Comments by Lecturers:

1. I would like there to be more time and emphasis put on one's own teaching abilities - different methods of teaching, classroom management, discipline problems.

2. I made use of the Jordanhill experience in the most profitable way, taking the opportunity to learn as much as I could and I found that I got a lot of backing and encouragement from the lecturers, and my whole teaching approach improved immensely in terms of methods, materials, classroom management and job satisfaction. I looked at the Jordanhill course as an opportunity to resolve problem areas.

3. No apparent help / advice was given on what many lecturers are experiencing day by day - student discipline and student motivation.

4. strengths: opportunity to take time out to assess my own teaching methods and discuss educational developments with colleagues in the classroom.

5. The greatest strength is the framework it provided for focussing on one aspect of my teaching - trying out new methods, evaluating and investigating - There has been so little time to concentrate on these matters to the same extent since I finished the course

Discussion:

The vast majority of lecturers welcomed the chance to reflect upon their own teaching which the course provided.

There were also large measures of agreement that they had improved their knowledge and repertoire of methods, and had been enabled to try new methods. Overall 85% of lecturers believed that the course had improved their effectiveness in the classroom.

Those comments which reflect some dissatisfaction suggest (as in one comment quoted) that the perceived lack was in teaching-related areas such as student motivation and discipline.

GTC-registered lecturers were more likely to agree that they had been given an increased repertoire of methods and that their effectiveness in the classroom had improved.

Those lecturers with two years, or less, experience before going on the course were more likely to think that the course had improved their effectiveness in the classroom.

Those lecturers in the most recent intakes to SSFE were more likely to think that they had been given the chance to try new teaching methods.

Overall, lecturers are very positive about the effect of the course on their own teaching.

Do lecturers think that the nature of the course is appropriate to their needs?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
3.1 The content of the course was relevant to teaching in FE colleges N=248	18 7%	152 61%	68 27%	10 4%
3.2 The course provided information about current developments in FE N=255	25 10%	147 58%	70 28%	13 5%
3.3 The course provided a valuable theoretical background to education N=251	33 13%	165 66%	47 19%	6 2%
3.4 Meeting lecturers from other colleges was a very valuable part of the course N=255	182 71%	65 26%	7 3%	1 -

Comments by lecturers:

1. Good theoretical basis. Not enough input in the practicalities of teaching, especially for new staff - student control, legal requirements.

2. Geared to professional wordsmiths who have done nothing but teach (weakness).

3. ... much of the material was out of date, which is an important point when FE is changing so fast.

4. I feel that if more of the course was done in 'local' locations by local 'managers' it would be more relevant and not perceived to be 10 years out of date.

5. Meeting other lecturers from other colleges and other areas. This gave me much confidence in myself and my abilities. It opened my eyes to why I did some things during a lesson.

Discussion:

While most lecturers thought that the course was relevant to teaching in FE colleges and provided information on current developments in FE, in each case one third of lecturers disagreed with this.

There was a reasonable level of agreement that the course provided a valuable theoretical background to education.

The majority of lecturers strongly agreed about the value of meeting lecturers from other colleges. Those lecturers from colleges which are geographically more distant from SSFE were even more inclined to agree with this item.

Some comments from lecturers suggest that while the theoretical aspects of the course had value, the balance of the course was too much towards theory. This should be read alongside the finding about the value which lecturers placed on components of the course with practical relevance in the classroom.

A minority of lecturers questioned how relevant, practical and up-to-date the course was, but valued meeting colleagues.

Related issue raised in written comments:
1. the nature of the student group

1. I enjoyed the course in its present form and found it helpful. The intermingling of plasterers and poets, accountants and actors was enjoyable. I feel sorry for the 'painter' or 'brickie' who is required to produce a thematic study on the same theme, in the same time, and to the same standard as another course member who perhaps has a PhD.

2. I have sympathy for those involved in preparing and teaching students ranging from those with high vocational skills but little formal academic training to those who already have high academic training. Understandably the middle ground could disappoint both ends of the spectrum.

3. Many faults of the course can be attributed to structure - attempt to group non-similar students together - results too jargon-ridden for non-academic students, too content-low for rest.

4. A major problem is the wide range of experience and educational background of students which made it difficult to satisfy individual requirements - a feeling of lowest common denominator predominated.

5. I would have preferred to have been in a group of physicists / chemists etc in order that exercises / studies could have been particularly focussed on science teaching.

6. It appeared to me that with such a wide cross-section of disciplines and qualification levels on the course at one time, the level of presentation of some topics was necessarily very general. Some postgraduate members would not experience new material in some areas. This may also be affected by the somewhat 'loose' cognate groupings.

Discussion:

Other comments by lecturers raised two issues which are loosely related to the nature of the course. The first of these concerned the nature of the student groups which are formed at SSFE. Whilst there was some support for having mixed groups, there were equally those who felt that lecturers from different subject areas have different needs, and that teaching graduate and non-graduate staff together caused problems for both groups. These comments are exemplified in the quotations given, but we are unable to give any quantitative estimate of the extent that they are held by FE lecturers.

Questions were raised about the way in which students are grouped at SSFE.

Related issue raised in written comments:
2. delays in entry to the course

1. The course should be available after a short entry time to FE, say two years. Five years or longer is too long before entry.

2. I would have liked to have trained on the TQ(FE) at an earlier stage in my teaching career.

3. Personally I feel that the weakness of the course is the timing. I had already been teaching five years when I went. I feel that more valuable experience was gained during those five years. The TQ(FE) course would be very beneficial to new lecturers.

Discussion:

The second issue raised concerned the length of time which some lecturers had to wait before they could attend SSFE. In fact 23% of the sample of lecturers had been in full time FE teaching for two years or less before going to SSFE, and 41% had been in full time FE teaching for five or more years.

These comments should be read alongside the finding that those with two years experience, or less, were more likely to think that the course had improved their effectiveness in the classroom.

There was some evidence of dissatisfaction with waiting times to go on the course.

Were lecturers satisfied with communication about the course?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
4.1 The course requirements were made clear to me N=251	34	159	50	8
	14%	63%	20%	3%
4.2 The criteria which I had to achieve for success on the course were made clear to me N=255	49	142	53	11
	19%	56%	21%	4%
4.3 I received adequate feedback about my performance on the course N=255	35	142	59	19
	14%	56%	23%	8%

Comments by lecturers:

1. Weaknesses - The lack of positive feedback about your success in completing the various aspects of the course.

2. The assignments were the best opportunity I had for professional development, but I felt that feedback was limited - simply a pass mark - rather than an opportunity to discuss anything constructively

3. I found the course very useful. Feedback on my classroom interaction gave me more confidence.

4. I felt feedback was extremely good, except in case of written exam* - returned papers with tutors comments would be helpful.

[* Note: the written examination no longer forms part of the course]

Discussion:

Lecturers seemed generally satisfied with the information they were given on course requirements, the criteria for success, and their performance on the course. However a minority of lecturers (approximately one quarter) were not satisfied with these aspects of communication. The comments suggest that dissatisfaction was particularly related to lack of positive feedback on achievement, with the view being expressed that some form of 'constructive' discussion would be more valuable than a simple 'pass' mark.

Most lecturers thought that communication about the course was satisfactory, but there was room for improvement in the positive communication of achievement.

What were lecturers views on the teaching conducted by SSFE?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
5.1 The course was taught in a way which was appropriate for FE college staff N=248	15 6%	131 53%	78 32%	24 10%
5.2 The course was taught in a way which was student-centred. N=252	29 12%	160 64%	51 20%	12 5%
5.3 The course was highly participative N=253	37 15%	169 69%	45 18%	2 1%
5.4 The course benefited me by giving me an insight into what it is like to be a student N=254	38 15%	125 49%	74 29%	17 7%
5.6 Standards on the course are applied consistently N=245	6 2%	85 35%	113 46%	41 17%

Comments by lecturers:

1. At Jordanhill the variation in knowledge and expertise between some staff and others was very striking, and it was a matter of luck whether one had a good or poor experience.

2. It was amusing (sad perhaps) to have a tutor tell me how to develop student centred learning techniques in the classroom and not lead by example. In short, more practical content needs to be incorporated within the course

3. I found that some teaching staff at Jordanhill were not adept at using a variety of modern teaching methods, depending far too much on lecturing, and not being very good at it to boot! Conversely others on the staff were excellent. Paradoxically therefore both strengths and weaknesses are Jordanhill's teaching staff.

4. Was not impressed by poor teaching of 'basics' - ie teaching methods / lesson planning etc. Items such as how to prepare a good case study, how to formulate questions etc were not covered. I feel a strong basic training is required even for people in teaching for several years to improve on their basic skills.

5. The aims and objectives were sound and so was the course design. However I do not believe that the quality of the delivery was sufficiently high - although there were exceptions. Very often the teaching methods and standards of teaching materials being used were very poor. Very much a case of don't do as I do - do as I say.

6. There were many strengths of the course, too numerous to mention, however, I must point out the high standard of teaching and support at SSFE.

7. Teaching methods were exceptionally well taught, backed by supportive tutor visits to the college and my class. To have a supportive and positively critical teaching methods tutor observing you as an individual within the teaching environment is greatly appreciated.

8. Some very high quality teaching staff who are to be admired.

9. Our group was very fortunate in having an excellent course tutor who was very helpful and supportive.

Discussion:

The variation in the responses to items on the teaching at SSFE, and the similar variation in the associated written comments, was very striking.

It would seem that while many lecturers attending the course found that SSFE teaching was appropriate to them as FE college staff, and was 'student-centred' and 'participative' in nature, others were less fortunate. Forty two per cent of respondents felt that the teaching was not appropriate to them, one quarter thought that it was not student centred, and one fifth thought that it was not participative.

The written comments range from very high praise for the efforts of SSFE staff to some sad bemusement that they do not lead by example.

Much of the explanation for this may be revealed by the responses to the final item which shows that 63% of the lecturers who responded believed that standards at SSFE were not applied consistently. This is reflected in comments that 'it was a matter of luck whether one had a good or a bad experience'.

There were some statistical differences between groups of lecturers. Those who are currently registered with the GTC were more likely to think that the teaching at SSFE was appropriate to FE college staff and that the course was highly participative.

The item above on whether the course benefitted staff by giving them 'an insight into what it is like to be a student' was included because it was a topic that came up in some of the initial interviews with lecturers. It is difficult to know what to make of the overall responses, except to say that most lecturers seem to have received some benefit from being reminded what it is like to be on the receiving end. However, it was interesting to note that lecturers in the 'Industrial Processing' area are significantly more likely to think that this had been of benefit to them. No explanation for this is obvious from the data.

Some lecturers appear to have a high opinion of teaching at SSFE, others much less so, and there is a strong suggestion that standards of teaching are variable.

What are lecturers views on the balance of course work between SSFE and their own college?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
6.1 More of the course could have been done within my own college N=253	14 6%	50 20%	145 57%	44 17%
6.2 The course would have been less successful if it had not involved time away from my own college N=252	131 52%	82 33%	28 11%	11 4%
6.3 More time spent at Jordanhill would be beneficial N=253	44 17%	67 27%	105 42%	37 15%
6.4 The time spent in the SSFE is fully utilised to good effect N=253	17 7%	84 33%	105 42%	47 19%
6.5 Initial induction training is as important as the Jordanhill course N=240	87 36%	106 44%	37 15%	10 4%

Comments by lecturers:

1. Present course structure and duration is adequate. Any reduction in Jordanhill time would diminish the value of the course, and might cause parent colleges to take the question of remission and replacement less seriously.

2. I enjoyed the part of the course completed at Jordanhill and would have preferred it if the complete course was there rather than distance learning at my own college.

3. I strongly support the concept of leave to study in blocks at Jordanhill. A lecturer will not have library facilities in own college and will be disturbed regularly.

4. Parts of the course should be carried out in college as part of a staff appraisal / staff development programme and assessment only carried out from outside. Colleges would need resourced and the whole role of mentor beefed up

5. If more colleagues could be doing this course in their own college, say within two years of starting, the course could be even more beneficial, especially where a larger college with a split campus is involved.

6. Four week blocks were very useful. One week blocks at Christmas could have been put to better use.

7. The four week blocks were much better than the one week Christmas blocks. The latter were too short and not as well organised.

8. Block 7 was a waste of time

Discussion:

Only one quarter of the respondents believed that more of the course could have been done within their own college, and 85% thought that it 'would have been less successful if it had not involved time away' from their own college (although this is a poorly worded item which may have caused some confusion).

At the same time, less than half of the lecturers who responded believed that more time spent at Jordanhill would have been beneficial.

The written comments from lecturers support these views, pointing out, for example, the benefits of the facilities for studying available at Jordanhill and the resource implications for colleges if they were to take a greater part in training FE lecturers.

If these findings are taken together, they suggest relative satisfaction with the balance of the course between Jordanhill and the lecturers' own colleges.

However, 61% of lecturers do not think that the time spent in SSFE is fully utilised to best effect. The written comments suggest that dissatisfaction is particularly evident with regard to the short one week blocks which form part of the course. Comments which included the phrase 'waste of time' could have been replicated many times.

It is especially worth noting that four-fifths of the lecturers who responded thought that initial induction training is as important as the course at SSFE, which perhaps reinforces their opinions on the need for relevance to the classroom and practicality in their training.

There were no statistically significant differences between any groups of lecturers in these responses.

There is reasonable satisfaction with the balance of the course between SSFE and the FE colleges, but some doubt about the effective use of time while in SSFE.
Initial induction training is highly valued by lecturers.

How do lecturers view block release and the arrangements in their own college?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
7.1 The block release components of the course caused practical difficulties in my own college N=253	31 12%	83 33%	125 49%	14 6%
7.2 The block release component of the course caused me personal difficulties N=253	21 8%	41 16%	154 61%	37 15%
7.3 My own college allowed me sufficient remission from teaching for private study N=253	80 32%	121 48%	31 12%	21 8%
7.4 My own college was supportive during the time I was on the course N=252	48 19%	147 58%	46 18%	11 4%
7.5 It is difficult to complete the course at the same time as teaching N=253	35 14%	72 29%	119 47%	27 11%
7.6 The greatest support for me came from my colleagues on the course. N=251	61 24%	113 45%	72 29%	5 2%

Comments by lecturers:

1. At a disadvantage in coming from a small college in that there is little or no contact with others who are doing the course at the same time ...

2. College management must decide whether the TQ(FE) is valuable or not. If so, then the lecturer must have remission in teaching duties etc.

3. I was fortunate to have a supportive college which gave me a full day each week, out of college if I wished. Being able to apply the assignments on a 'field study' basis was valuable.

4. Too many distractions when you return to own college ie prep for classes, administration for classes and, of course, teaching.

5. Every effort was made by college staff to assist myself and others on the course, particularly the staff development coordinator.

Discussion:

A sizeable proportion (45%) of lecturers acknowledged that the block release components of the course caused some practical difficulties to their own colleges, and for around one quarter of lecturers there was also some personal difficulty involved.

Not surprisingly the personal difficulties were significantly more apparent for those lecturers from geographically distant colleges, but did not feature largely in the responses from lecturers based relatively close to SSFE.

Most lecturers found that their own college was supportive during their time on the course and allowed them sufficient remission for private study. This was not always the case. Statistical analysis indicated significant variations between regions in the extent of support offered. However, this may in fact be a disguised effect of differing levels of support in individual colleges. The numbers in the sample were not, unfortunately, sufficient to allow this to be tested. It was possible to check groups of colleges and it became clear that those colleges which are geographically closest to SSFE were least likely to have offered sufficient remission and support.

Forty three per cent of lecturers found some difficulty in completing the course at the same time as teaching, and 69% agreed that the greatest support for them came from their colleagues on the course, thus supporting the earlier finding about the value placed on meeting colleagues from other colleges. There were no statistically significant differences between any groups of lecturers on these two items.

Although block release can cause some difficulties, colleges are generally supportive, particularly those at some distance from SSFE

Were colleges mentors and SSFE support systems found to be useful to lecturers on the course?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
8.1 Mentors are fully informed of the requirements of the course N=242	8 3%	87 36%	98 41%	49 20%
8.2 The mentor system ensured that I had adequate support within my own college N=250	15 6%	91 36%	97 39%	47 19%
8.3 I found the support offered by telephone tutorials useful N=223	14 6%	106 48%	78 35%	25 11%
8.4 Visits by SSFE staff to my college were very useful to me N=253	63 25%	142 56%	45 18%	3 1%

Comments by lecturers:

1. Whilst I received considerable support from my own college, my mentor had little or no information from Jordanhill regarding many aspects of the course.

2. Very much on your own. Phone tutorials difficult. Mentors not aware of content of the course. Necessity for senior staff as mentors - wide variation in assistance.

3. Telephone support needs improving - tutors hardly ever there - poor feedback.

4. It was good to have a helpful hand in the classroom at the visits, I learnt a lot from these visits.

Discussion:

Over 60% of lecturers thought that their mentors in their own college were not fully informed of the requirements of the course, and a slightly smaller number (58%) did not think that the mentor system ensured that they had adequate support.

Slightly over half of the respondents found the telephone tutorials useful, but there were some comments to the effect that tutors were difficult to contact by telephone as they were frequently busy elsewhere.

The great majority (81%) of lecturers endorsed the value of visits by SSFE staff to their college, again confirming the value which lecturers place on relevance to the classroom of their training.

In all of the above items there were statistically significant differences between regions. One region appeared as one of the three most negative regions in the responses to all of these items, and another appeared in the 'bottom three' in the responses to three of them. These responses do not appear to have any relationship with the previous set of items on support offered by colleges.

There are some problems with the system of mentors and telephone tutorials, but college visits are highly valued.

What value did lecturers place on the course and the resulting TQ(FE) as a qualification?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
9.1 The primary value of the Teaching Qualification (Further Education) is in seeking promotion N=252	7 3%	31 12%	148 59%	66 26%
9.2 The course has improved my longer term career prospects N=245	22 9%	141 58%	66 27%	16 7%
9.3 The TQ(FE) is a valuable qualification which confers professional status on FE lecturers N=244	56 23%	129 51%	45 18%	14 6%

Comments by lecturers:

1. There is an unfortunate stigma attached to the course - 'Enjoy your holiday!' - and too many people approach the course with this attitude.

2. I would like to see a a qualification which is one to be proud of and achievable with an amount of degree-level hard work (practical), not one which is joked about when you get back to college.

3. They [Jordanhill staff] have to fight against the bad reputation of the course and the lack of status the course has in many FE establishments.

4. TQ(FE) will only be a valuable qualification when it is completely compulsory.

5. It would be a more valuable qualification if all lecturers had to obtain it, for instance within two years of commencement in college.

Discussion:

It is in some ways reassuring to note that the great majority of lecturers do not see the primary value of the TQ(FE) as being a means of securing promotion, although two-thirds do believe that it has improved their career prospects. This contrasts with the desirability of such a qualification for promotion in the eyes of college principals (see next section).

Almost three quarters of the lecturers felt that the qualification did confer professional status upon them.

It is therefore interesting to note the number of written comments which reveal a feeling that the course is not generally held in high esteem. It is impossible to quantify such a view of the course as it would require a survey of the general FE lecturer population, including those who had not been on the course, but there were a number of such comments made. It is also worth noting the occasional view that the course would be more valued if it were compulsory.

There were no statistically significant differences between any groups of lecturers on any of the above items.

Lecturers who have been on the course have a reasonable regard for its value but some feel that it is not held in general esteem.

What differences in attitudes can be identified between different groups of lecturers?

It was possible to check for differences between lecturers grouped according to several variables. Of these the 'year of entry to the course', 'subject areas taught' and 'number of years of full time FE teaching' produced relatively few statistically significant differences. Where these occurred they have been mentioned in the text.

However, three grouping variables produced some patterns of responses which are worth noting separately. These variables were:

1. whether or not the lecturer was registered with the GTC
2. the region in which they are employed
3. the geographical distance of their college from SSFE.

1. Differences between GTC registered teachers and others

Forty per cent of the respondents were registered with the GTC at the time of completing the questionnaire. This group were much more likely than other staff to agree that:

- Education Studies, Projects, Thematic Studies Options, and Maintaining a Record of Professional Practice were valuable parts of the course;
- the course gave them a repertoire of methods of delivery;
- the course has improved their effectiveness in the classroom;
- the content of the course was relevant to teaching in FE colleges;
- the course was taught in a way which was appropriate for FE college staff;
- the course was highly participative;

These responses are all directly related to teaching, either their own or that of the SSFE staff, and appear to indicate a greater tendency amongst GTC-registered FE lecturers to display an appreciation of 'professional issues' and methods in teaching. It is, of course, highly likely that it is because these respondents have this attitude to their own (and others') teaching that they have chosen to be registered with the GTC.

Lecturers who have chosen to register with the GTC tend to display more positive attitudes to the course and its benefits.

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2. Differences between lecturers in different regions

Statistically significant regional variations were apparent on the following items:

- whether lecturers agreed that they had received adequate feedback about their performance on the course;
- whether their own college allowed them sufficient remission from teaching for private study;
- whether their own college was supportive during the time that they were on the course;
- whether mentors were fully informed of the requirements of the course;
- whether the mentor system ensured that they had adequate support in their own college;
- whether they found the support offered by telephone tutorials useful;
- whether visits by SSFE staff to their own college were considered useful;
- whether the block release components of the course caused them personal difficulties.

Some of these differences are a result of the geographical distance of the colleges from Jordanhill, and will be discussed further in the following section. Others may be more dependent on the influence of the individual colleges' arrangements than the region. It can be assumed that individual colleges will take a greater responsibility for supporting their staff as they move towards incorporation. Unfortunately it was not statistically possible to analyse the responses at the level of individual colleges as the numbers were not great enough.

Nevertheless it would appear that the level of support offered to lecturers who are attending the course varies from one part of the country to another, and that this may have something to do with institutional arrangements at regional level.

The support offered to lecturers appears to vary across the country

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3. Differences between lecturers according to the distance of their own college from Jordanhill

It was also possible to group lecturers according to the geographical distance of their college from Jordanhill. Three broadly defined groups of colleges were identified:

- the first group were those colleges which were considered to be in reasonable commuting distance of Jordanhill (probable journey time one hour or less);
- the second group consisted of colleges at a distance where commuting was possible but difficult and time consuming;
- the third group consisted of colleges at a distance which made it impossible or unreasonable to expect anyone to commute.

An element of judgement entered into the classification of the colleges, as simple geographical distance takes no account of other factors which might facilitate travel (such as the existence of main road or rail links). Judgement was therefore made for each college by the researcher. It should also be borne in mind that it is not necessarily true that the location of a college is always an accurate indication of the travel difficulties which might be faced by a lecturer (lecturers may live some way away from the college). With these provisoes in mind, it was found that lecturers whose colleges were geographically more distant from Jordanhill were more likely to think that:

- meeting lecturers from other colleges was a very valuable part of the course;
- their own college allowed them sufficient remission from teaching for private study;
- the block release components of the course caused them personal difficulty.

These findings are not unexpected, as it is reasonable to assume that lecturers from relatively far afield will have comparatively less opportunity to meet colleagues than those in major centres in Central Scotland. Similarly it could be expected that these colleges, knowing the difficulties faced, would make an effort to support their staff, and that the staff themselves, because of the distances travelled and the need to stay away from home, would face personal difficulties.

Lecturers from geographically distant colleges face personal difficulties, but value meeting colleagues on the course.

The views of FE college principals

In this chapter each section addresses a research question which was a focus for the study. Within each section the organisation of material is as follows:

1. a statement of the research question being addressed;
2. relevant quantitative data from the questionnaire survey;
3. a selection of relevant written comments made by the respondents;
4. a brief discussion of the results, pointing out any significant differences between groups of respondents, or points of comparison with other results;
5. a summary statement of the main finding.

Do Principals view the SSFE course as cost-effective provision?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
1.1 The course is a cost-effective means of providing professional staff training N=33	0	15	13	5
	0%	46%	39%	15%

Comments by Principals:

1. Very expensive ... takes a huge slice from our in-service budget ... For the price of sending two members of staff away per year we could employ a 0.5 FTE staff trainer ... I hope these views are given serious consideration since I do not believe I can sustain and justify support for Jordanhill for much longer.

2. Cost is high for a college like this one situated some distance from the SSFE

3. Main strength ... outweighed by weakness of inflexibility, inconvenience, cost ...

Discussion:

The above figures suggest that there is some concern amongst college principals about the cost of sending staff to Jordanhill. The principals' responses did not vary according to the distance of their college from Jordanhill, but two principals, one of a smaller and more remote college, and the second of a relatively distant college, did comment on the cost (comments 1 and 2).

Principals who had some connection with SSFE (as external examiners or members of SSFE committees) showed a statistically significant difference from others in that they tended to view the 'cost-effectiveness' of the course more favourably.

Over half of the principals have doubts about the cost-effectiveness of the SSFE course as a means of providing staff training.

What value is attached to the course and the resulting TQ(FE) as a qualification?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
2.1 The course ensures that the standard of FE lecturers remains high N=31	1 3%	9 29%	20 65%	1 3%
2.2 The possession of a TQ(FE) is a guarantee of quality of FE teaching staff N=31	0 0%	7 23%	21 68%	3 10%
2.3 Possession of a TQ(FE) is desirable for promotion N=32	10 31%	19 59%	3 9%	0 0%

Comments by Principals:

1. As a former examiner (external) on the course I have been impressed by the high standards set and achieved.

2. Too inflexible - takes no account of the individual's background, qualifications or experience.

Discussion:

Two-thirds of the principals did not think that the course ensured that the standard of FE lecturer remained high. They may, however, have responded in this way because they felt that the standard was high irrespective of the course.

Over three-quarters did not see the TQ(FE) as a guarantee of quality. Principals with SSFE connections, and principals whose colleges were geographically close to Jordanhill, were significantly more likely to see it as a guarantee of quality. This may be because these groups are more likely to be familiar with the course.

Nevertheless, over 90% of principals saw the TQ(FE) as desirable for promotion, despite their admission that it was not regarded as a mark of 'quality'. This contrasts with the views of the lecturers themselves, two-thirds of whom agreed that the TQ(FE) enhanced their career prospects , but only 15% of whom thought that its primary value was in seeking promotion.

Principals do not see the TQ(FE), in itself, as an overall guarantee of the quality of FE teaching staff.

What particular benefits do principals see in the course for their staff?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
3.1 The course enhances the teaching skills of FE staff N=31	5 16%	20 65%	6 19%	0 0%
3.2 The completion of the course boosts the confidence of staff N=32	5 16%	25 78%	2 6%	0 0%
3.3 The course provides staff with the professional knowledge necessary to their career N=32	1 3%	17 53%	13 41%	1 3%
3.4 Completion of the course makes staff more flexible N=32	0 0%	10 31%	19 59%	3 9%
3.5 The course keeps FE staff up to date with current developments N=31	2 7%	16 52%	12 39%	1 3%
3.6 A significant benefit of the course is the opportunity it provides to meet colleagues from elsewhere N=32	19 59%	12 38%	1 3%	0 0%

Comments by Principals:

1. I am satisfied with the present programme. The balance of on-the-job / Off-the-job is correct. There are elements of the course which are suited to off-the-job training.

2. In many cases the course tutors are not conversant with present classroom techniques.

3. Some content and teaching methods are a bit stale (not competence / unit based).

4. Good opportunity to meet other lecturers and share experience. Good opportunity to face wider issues in FE which are often seen as the province of 'the management'.

5. Jordanhill staff may wish to update industrial experience and may not be aware of the implications of new initiatives.

Discussion:

The great majority of principals agree that the course enhances the teaching skills of staff and boosts their confidence. Principals with SSFE connections were significantly more positive about the enhancement of teaching skills than others. There is less agreement that the course provides the professional knowledge required for an FE teaching career, or that it keeps staff up to date with current developments. It may be that these are seen as areas which are more the province of on-going staff development. Some principals, however, commented that the course was seen as 'too traditional' or that SSFE 'may not be aware of the implications of new initiatives'. Principals whose colleges are geographically close to Jordanhill were less concerned about this aspect of the course.

Almost all principals agreed with the benefits of providing opportunities for FE lecturers to meet colleagues from elsewhere.

A majority (two-thirds) did not think that completion of the course made staff more flexible. Responses tended to be grouped in the middle two boxes, suggesting few strong feelings about this item. It is possible that all FE staff are expected to be flexible, irrespective of training.

The course was seen to benefit staff by enhancing their teaching skills and confidence, although there were some doubts expressed about the coverage of 'professional knowledge' and 'current developments'.

Is the approach to teaching at SSFE seen as appropriate?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
4.1 The teaching methods used on the course are appropriate for FE staff N=29	1 3%	19 66%	8 28%	1 3%
4.2 The course is suitable for experienced FE lecturing staff N=29	1 3%	12 41%	14 48%	2 7%

Comments by Principals:

1. Major weakness is too much emphasis on academic aspects. Insufficient support for 'practice'. On teaching methods tutors do not practice what they preach.

2. Too 'academic' for some, too low level for others.

3. Most have found the course useful.

4. Should allow opt-outs for prior learning.

Discussion:

Slightly over two-thirds of principals agreed that the teaching methods used on the course are appropriate for FE teaching staff. The minority view, which tended to feature more strongly in principals' comments, echoed the views of some lecturers about the lack of a 'student-centred' approach at SSFE.

Greater doubts were expressed about the suitability of the course for experienced lecturing staff.

Principals tend to approve of the teaching methods used at SSFE, but have greater doubts about the suitability of the course for experienced staff.

Were the administration and communication arrangements seen as satisfactory?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
5.1 The administrative arrangements for the course are satisfactory N=31	1 3%	25 81%	4 13%	1 3%
5.2 There is sufficient contact between the SSFE and this college to ensure the smooth running of the course N=33	0 0%	26 79%	6 18%	1 3%
5.3 There is adequate feedback from the SSFE on the progress of staff who are on the course N=31	0 0%	13 42%	14 45%	4 13%

No Principal chose to make any comment on these aspects of the course.

Discussion:

College principals tended to find the administrative arrangements for the course satisfactory, as was communication with SSFE regarding the running of the course. Responses for these two items tended to group in the middle two boxes, suggesting few strongly held views.

However, feedback from SSFE regarding the progress of staff on the course was seen as less than adequate by a majority of principals. Slightly over one quarter of lecturing staff held a similar view (see page 13).

There were no statistically significant differences between any groups of principals on the above items.

Principals see contact between SSFE and colleges as administratively satisfactory but less satisfactory regarding advice on staff progress.

When should the course be taken?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
6.1 The course is of greatest benefit in the early months of an FE teacher's career N=31	13 42%	9 29%	9 29%	0 0%
6.2 Many staff have to wait too long before they can go on the course N=32	12 38%	11 34%	9 28%	0 0%
6.3 The course takes too long to complete N=32	3 10%	10 29%	17 55%	2 7%

Comments by Principals:

1. The course is too long and has no direct college input.

2. Credit should be given for experience gained 'on the job' by those who attend the course - it is difficult to see the real benefit to a lecturer who has five years experience or more before attending the course.

3. Too long a wait for most staff before they start the course.

Discussion:

Over two-thirds of principals agreed that the course is of greatest benefit in the early part of a teacher's career, and that staff may have to wait too long before they go on the course. This should be set alongside the finding that lecturers with two years (or less) experience are significantly more likely to agree that the course enhanced their effectiveness in the classroom.

Principals whose colleges are geographically more distant from Jordanhill were significantly more likely to think that staff may have to wait too long to attend the course.

A minority of principals agreed that the course takes too long to complete, but principals of geographically more distant colleges were significantly more likely to think this.

Is it possible that these two findings are, at least partly, explained by the greater cost of sending a lecturer from a distant college to attend the course?

Principals are largely agreed about the benefits of early attendance on the course.

Are there consequences of the block release nature of the course?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
7.1 Releasing staff to attend the course is disruptive to their classes N=33	9 27%	17 52%	7 21%	0 0%
7.2 The timing of the block release components causes problems within the college N=33	10 30%	12 36%	11 33%	0 0%
7.3 There are problems in providing cover for staff during block release components N=33	13 39%	13 39%	7 21%	0 0%

Comments by Principals:

1. Two start dates, both in the summer, are not helpful. Staggered starts could be a means of having more people away.

Discussion:

The majority of principals readily agreed that there are problems caused by the block release nature of the course, particularly in the disruptive effect on classes and difficulties in providing cover.

No statistically significant differences were found between any groups of principals.

Compare the responses of lecturers, over half of whom acknowledge that practical difficulties arose in their own colleges. Three-quarters of lecturers also claimed that the block release components caused them personal difficulties, with the problems significantly greater for lecturers from distant colleges.

Principals acknowledged problems caused by the block release components of the course.

Do mentors provide in-college support for staff on the course?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
8.1 The system of in-college mentors provides valuable support for staff who are on the course N=33	5	24	4	0
	15%	73%	12%	0%

Comments by Principals:

1. The course is strengthened considerably when mentors are used by the students. Mentors, however, need more contact with Jordanhill staff.

Discussion:

Principals generally agree that mentors provide valuable support for staff who are on the course. Those principals with SSFE connections were significantly more positive. This should be compared with the lesser degree of agreement about the value of mentor support among lecturers, with the problem appearing greater in certain regions.

Principals believe that the college mentors provide valuable support.

What are the principals' views on single national provision?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
9.1 A benefit of the course is that it provides an element of distance and objectivity in the training of FE lecturers. N=30	5 17%	23 77%	2 7%	0 0%
9.2 A national body is required to ensure the standard of FE lecturer training N=33	12 36%	14 42%	6 18%	1 3%
9.3 Jordanhill is a valuable "centre of excellence" for FE training N=30	4 13%	14 47%	9 30%	3 10%

Comments by Principals:

1. Strengths - chance to distance one's learning from the everyday college experience.

2. There is an urgent need for an education Lead Body to set competence based National Standards as well as some existing standards from MCI and TDLB.

Discussion:

Principals are supportive of the idea of 'distance and objectivity' in FE lecturer training, and are very largely in agreement with the proposition that a national body (of an unspecified nature) is required to ensure the standard of training. These two findings would seem to imply support for the provision of training which is independent of the FE colleges themselves, and which has some national standing, but see later sections.

A majority of principals also agree that SSFE is a valuable 'centre of excellence' for FE training. However, a sizeable minority (40%) disagree with this last proposition. Principals with SSFE connections and those geographically close to Jordanhill are significantly more likely to agree that it is a valuable 'centre of excellence'.

Principals agree with 'distance and objectivity' and 'national standards' in FE lecturer training but this does not always imply uncritical endorsement of SSFE.

What influence should the colleges themselves have on staff training?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
10.1 As a college principal, I have an opportunity to influence the content and organisation of the course N=31	0 0%	6 19%	18 58%	7 23%
10.2 There should be a greater input from FE colleges themselves into FE lecturer training N=33	14 42%	18 55%	1 3%	0 0%
10.3 There should be greater local provision of FE lecturer training N=32	13 41%	12 38%	7 22%	0 0%

Comments by Principals:

1. It should be possible to bring the trainers into the college in order to reduce the backlog of training generated by the present method. ...simultaneous training of lecturers in-house, using open learning and tutor sessions.

2. Regional delivery arrangements should replace the SSFE - linking with HE professional training requirements.

3. I would suggest arrangements to be made which require / encourage greater use of expertise locally in FE colleges, also flexible learning arrangements and credit accumulation and use of assignments and 'action learning' as appropriate.

Discussion:

Few principals agree that they have any opportunity to influence the content and organisation of the course at SSFE. However, the vast majority believe that the FE colleges should have a greater input into FE lecturer training. Those principals with SSFE connections are significantly less likely to believe this.

A smaller (but still large) majority of principals also agree that there should be a greater degree of local provision of FE lecturer training. Once again, principals with SSFE connections are less likely to agree with this, as are those principals whose colleges are geographically close to Jordanhill. It may be that this latter group regard the present provision as already 'local'.

Principals feel that they have little influence over the present course and expressed a desire for greater local provision with input from the FE colleges themselves.

What specific suggestions for staff training did principals make?

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
11.1 It is desirable that there should be some form of accreditation available for in-college induction training N=33	11 33%	18 55%	4 12%	0 0%
11.2 There is scope for greater use of the assessment of prior learning in training FE lecturers N=33	13 39%	17 52%	3 9%	0 0%
11.3 There is greater scope for the use of work based learning in the training of FE lecturers N=33	16 49%	16 49%	1 3%	0 0%
11.4 Post-initial modules should be available to those who do not hold the TQ(FE) N=31	5 16%	22 71%	4 13%	0 0%

Comments by Principals:

1. Weaknesses - no compulsory induction ... underpinning knowledge [should be] provided as induction ASAP after entry into FE lecturing - ideally on entry. Further theory delivered in shorter sessions with more 'distance learning' with work-based assessment. Requirement for training throughout lecturing career.

2. [Suggested alternatives:]
    1. more open learning;
    2. more college based learning;
    3. colleges should be accredited / validated to award TQ(FE);
    4. need for initial 'training for trainers' type of award prior to entering the profession

3. Training should be based on TDLB standards. This would provide clear routes of progression from initial training through to management qualifications (MCI). All we need is a validating organisation with SOED providing funding for in-college trainer of staff.

4. I would like to see a programme which is:
    stated in competence terms;
    available on a modular basis;
    available within a coherent framework that includes core skills and offers theoretical underpinning on a core and options basis;
    accessible on the basis of flexible delivery;
    process-based, accords recognition of APL and provides for credit accumulation and transfer.

5. [Suggested alternatives:]
    1. commissioning local centres with local college input
    2. Free market (as in England and Wales)
    3. College-based with HE validation
    4. Distance / open learning a possibility.

Discussion:

Principals made many suggestions about alternative provision of staff training, not all of which had been anticipated in the questionnaire. There was a large degree of support for the possibilities of incorporating the assessment of prior learning (APL) and work based learning (WBL) into staff training; accrediting in-college induction courses; and greater availability of post-initial modules.

There were no significant differences amongst college principals on these items, except the last item, where principals with SSFE connections were less likely to favour greater availability of post-initial modules.

Those principals who chose to make additional written comments suggested day release courses, open and/or distance learning, and more training within lecturers' own colleges (perhaps with some form of external validation). There were mentions of competence-based training, TDLB and MCI standards, APL and WBL, modular course structures and flexible learning opportunities by several principals. Mention was also made of the need to make some form of training available to the increasing number of part-time staff in FE colleges.

These findings should be read alongside the earlier finding that principals also wish there to be some form of national body to ensure the quality of FE lecturer training.

Principals would appear to wish for more flexible provision of FE lecturer training with safeguards to ensure quality.

What differences in attitudes can be identified between different groups of principals?

It was found that the principals who responded to the questionnaire could be grouped in two ways which revealed statistically different responses between the groups:

1. Connections with SSFE

One group of principals (eight out of the thirty three respondents) currently have, or have had in the past, some connection with SSFE through membership of SSFE committees or through acting as external examiners. It was found that this group differed from other principals in that they were more likely to think that :

- the course was a cost effective means of providing training;
- possession of a TQ(FE) was a guarantee of quality of FE teaching staff;
- the course enhances the teaching skills of FE staff;
- the teaching methods used on the course are appropriate for FE staff;
- the system of in-college mentors provides valuable support for staff who are on the course;
- Jordanhill is a valuable 'centre of excellence' for FE training;
- a benefit of the course is that it provides an element of distance and objectivity in the training of FE lecturers.

They were less likely to think that:

- there should be greater input from FE colleges themselves into FE lecturer training;
- there should be greater local provision of FE lecturer training;
- post-initial modules should be available to those who do not hold the TQ(FE)

These findings may reflect either the greater knowledge of the SSFE and the TQ(FE) course which these principals have; or their greater loyalty to SSFE as an institution.

Principals with SSFE connections are more favourably disposed towards SSFE and less likely to favour greater local provision of training.

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2. Geographical distance from SSFE

Principals were also grouped according to the geographical distance of their college from Jordanhill. An element of judgement entered into the way in which colleges were grouped. The first group were those colleges which were considered to be in reasonable commuting distance of Jordanhill (probable journey time one hour or less); the second group consisted of colleges at a distance where commuting was possible but difficult and time consuming; and the third group consisted of colleges at a distance which made it impossible or unreasonable to expect anyone to commute.

It was found that the more distant a college was from Jordanill then the more likely were college principals to think that:

- the possession of a TQ(FE) is <u>not</u> a guarantee of quality of FE teaching staff;
- many staff have to wait too long before they can go on the course;
- the course takes too long too complete;
- there should be greater local provision of FE lecturer training

It is difficult to explain the first three of these findings, although it is possible to speculate that they reflect a general dissatisfaction with a distant organisation. The fourth finding is as one would expect.

Principals whose colleges are geographically distant from Jordanhill are more likely to favour increasing local provision.

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